

Feeding: What to Expect From 24 to 36 Months

What most children can do	What you can do	What children are learning
Choose which foods to eat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer 3–4 healthy choices during mealtimes, <i>including ones the children are sure to eat</i>. If children bring lunch, suggest that parents provide 3–4 choices in bag lunches as well (e.g., deli turkey, bagel, slice of cheese, and applesauce). • Offer 2–3 healthy snacks a day. • Let children see you making healthy eating choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make healthy food choices as she grows. • That she knows her own body. • To eat when she is hungry and stop when she is full.
Use words to express his thoughts and feelings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk with children during mealtimes. • Ask questions and listen to what children have to say. Use words to describe toddlers' ideas, feelings, and experiences. • Encourage good manners by saying, "Please," "Thank you," and "May I be excused?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New words. • That mealtime is fun. • That her ideas matter. • Good behavior at the table.
Help out during mealtime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer simple tasks like putting napkins on the table, placing precut vegetables in the salad, or helping to mix batter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That he is an important member of the group. • That he is very capable. • That helping others feels good.